

The Reading Edge Kurzweil Reader

A Beginner's Guide

What is it?

The Reading Edge Kurzweil Reader is an adaptive technology device used to assist disabled patrons in gaining access to print collections, by reading text aloud, or storing it on a disk to be read later.

Who uses it?

Patrons with visual impairment and/or learning disabilities may find the Kurzweil reader helpful.

How does it work?

The bidirectional scanner captures an image of the text. An Optical Character Recognition (OCR) program converts the image to text (approximately 90% accurate). A Speech Synthesis program then reads the text aloud.

What can it read?

- English language text. Memory chips for other languages are available. There is no translation function available.
- C The OCR program works best when text is:
 - < in page blocks or columns
 - C between 9-14 point font
 - C dark print on light paper
 - C aligned straight on the page. The reader can tolerate approximately 10% of skew.
- C The OCR program has difficulty with:

- C fancy fonts
- C large or small type
- C light print on a dark background
- C busy backgrounds
- C low contrast between print and background
- C Irregular text blocks.

Operating the Reading Edge Kurzweil Reader

Getting Started

- C Plug in the headphones and turn on the reader. Headphones are kept in the top right-hand drawer of the desk. Wait for opening message.
- C Raise the cover and place text on the glass. Align document with any edge. The text can be oriented in any direction. Long pages will need to be copied, cut, and pasted into useable blocks.
- C On the keypad, press the *start scanning* key.
- C **Wait patiently** for text to be processed.

Working with the Speech Synthesis Program

- C When reader begins speaking, use controls to adjust speed and volume.
- C To stop reading, press the key marked *stop/continue reading*. To resume, press key again.
- C You can use the keypad to go back or skip ahead.
- C You can choose to include punctuation symbols. Punctuation is turned off in the default setting.
- C You can bookmark places in the text, so that you can return to them easily. For instructions, see the User's Guide.
- C Using the keypad, you can back up or skip ahead.
- C To read a table across columns, use the *column* key.
- C You can change the reading voices by using the editing keypad. See the User's Guide for help.

Changing Keypad Modes

- C To change keypad modes, hold the key labeled *stop/continue reading/shift*.
- C Press the key labeled *select keypad* until the desired mode is reached.
- C The keypad has 6 modes: *reading, setup, braille editing, editing, communication setup, and disk management*. The default is *reading*.
- C Keypad maps are found on the wall behind the reader.

Saving and Retrieving

You can save files to a disk, or retrieve files to read, using the disk drive attached to the reader. Make sure that the power for the drive is turned on. The switch is in the back on the left.

Saving a File

- C When you have finished scanning, change the keypad to *disk management* mode.
- C Press the key labeled *mark text*.
- C Confirm by pressing the key labeled *last page*.
- C The file will be saved as “untitled#”.

Retrieving a File

- C Change the keypad to *disk management* mode.
- C Press the key labeled *erase text*. The reader will speak the name of the first file on the disk. Continue pressing the *erase text* key until you get to the file you wish to load.
- C To load the file, press the key labeled *last page*. Wait for the file to load. The reader can only find files stored in the root directory of a disk.
- C When the message tells you that the operation is done, change the keypad back to *reading* mode, and press the *stop/continue reading* key to begin speech synthesis.

Saving on Audiotape

- C To record a document on audiotape, plug the tape recorder into the appropriate jack.
- C Insert tape, and set controls for recording. Use the *pause* button to hold the tape ready.
- C Begin scanning. When reader begins to speak, release the pause button and begin recording.

Shutting the Reader Down

- C When you have finished, remove the text from the glass and close the cover.
- C Turn off the reader. If you have used the disk drive, remove disk from drive and switch off the power.
- C Disconnect any peripherals and return them to storage.
- C Return all manuals and instructions to the top right-hand desk drawer.

Controls

